



Board of Directors Handbook: A Guide to the Responsibilities of STMA Leadership

Part I: An Overview of Board Service

Introduction

Board service can be a most gratifying volunteer activity. The satisfaction that comes with knowing that you made a difference in an organization is immeasurable. As an STMA board member you give confidence and accountability to the membership. Volunteering for board service is one way to validate your leadership abilities and enhance your credibility with your peers, your employer, your community and the industry. STMA strives to be effective and efficient with your time and resources and has dedicated a headquarters staff to help make your board volunteer experience a rewarding one.

With leadership comes responsibility. This guide provides prospective board candidates with information to help you understand the responsibilities of being an STMA board member. Whether you are considering running for election to the board now or sometime in the future, or have been newly appointed to fill a board position, this handbook has been developed to provide to you an honest overview of your obligations.

STMA – The Organization

Mission:

To be the recognized leader in strengthening the sports turf industry and enhancing members' competence and acknowledgement of their professionalism.

STMA is a 501 (c) 6 not-for-profit organization incorporated in the state of Colorado. As a not-for-profit association, STMA does not pay income taxes and has responsibilities to file an annual report with the State of Colorado. STMA is also required to have Bylaws that outline its governance system and membership requirements.

Key Statistics

Headquarters Location: 805 New Hampshire, Ste. E, Lawrence, KS 66044

Headquarters Telephone: 800-323-3875

Headquarters Fax: 785-843-2977

Staff: CEO Kim Heck, 4 staff

Annual Conference & Exhibition: January

Monthly Magazine: SportsTurf Magazine

Membership: Approximately 2,600

Budget: Approximately \$1.2 million

23 Committee/Subcommittees: Awards, Bylaws, Certification, Chapter Relations, Conference, Conference Education, Conference Exhibition, Conference Tours, Editorial, Ethics, Environmental, Finance and Audit, Historical, Information Outreach, International, Membership, Commercial Membership, Nominations, Past Presidents' Advisory Council, Scholarship, Student Challenge, Technical Standards, Website

Board of Directors Responsibility

The STMA Board of Directors is the governing body for the association. It sets policy and strategic direction for the programs and services it provides to its membership and is accountable to its membership. The Board of Directors is responsible for the financial oversight of the association and for putting in place the appropriate management system for day-to-day operations. They have the authority as a collective group to approve contracts, employ persons, engage in legal action, and hold title to property. Individual board members do not have any legal authority to determine policy, employ persons, engage in legal actions, etc. unless specifically authorized do so by official board action. The STMA board is covered by Directors and Officers liability insurance.

Composition

Board members are elected by the membership. Board volunteers receive no compensation for board service.

The STMA board is comprised of 13 board members, which includes five Officers and eight Directors. The term of office for the Officers is one year. The outcome of the Secretary/Treasurer election determines who is on the path to the Presidency. Once elected, the Secretary/Treasurer ascends to the President-Elect office unopposed at the next election, and the President Elect moves to the President unopposed. The President automatically ascends to the Immediate Past President office. The Nominating Committee places on the ballot for election the other candidates for Officer and Director positions (except for one Director position that is appointed by the President), and may ask specific questions of board candidates to determine eligibility and qualifications.

Officers

The specific duties of each Officer are defined in the STMA Bylaws. The Officers are:

- President
- President-Elect
- Immediate Past President
- Vice-President Commercial
- Secretary/Treasurer

Directors

The Directors are elected to represent specific segments of membership. They each serve a two-year term, with the exception of the two At-Large Directors who serve a one-year term. Three directors are elected in even numbered years offset by three directors elected in odd-numbered years. One Sports Turf Manager from each of the following membership segments is elected to a Director position:

- **Director** – Who manages sports fields used by professional athletes
- **Director** – Who manages sports fields for institutions that provide education beyond the secondary level
- **Director** – Who manages sports fields for institutions that provide education to students in grades K-12
- **Director** – Who manages sports fields for a parks and recreational facility, municipality, city or other non-profit entity
- **Director** – Commercial (company engaged in a commercial enterprise providing services and/or products to the sports turf profession)
- **Director** – Academic (person engaged in research, education or in extension outreach programs related to sports fields)
- **Director** – At Large – Elected from any segment of membership
- **Director** – At Large – Appointed by the President. Usually the President will appoint the candidate who does not win the Secretary/Treasurer election to this At-Large position

The balloting is conducted prior to the annual conference using mail and electronic methods as defined in the Bylaws. Newly elected board members take office during the annual meeting, which is held during the conference.

Individual Board Member's Responsibilities

The following is expected of each board member:

- **Attend and actively participate in quarterly board meetings (4 per year):
January, March, July, October**
 - Board meeting locations vary and are often at an upcoming conference site. Each meeting is typically 1 ½ days to 2 ½ days long, with the exception of the January meeting. It is held just prior to the start of the STMA conference at the conference site and typically lasts ½ to ¾ of a day.
 - Dates for the Board meetings are usually set two meetings in advance.
 - All expenses for board meeting attendance are paid by the STMA.

- Board books are sent in advance of each meeting, outlining the actions and discussions needed. Each board member is to fully prepare in advance by reading all provided materials.
 - Board members will also lead discussions on relevant issues, such as those that are generated from their committees. Board members are expected to be open-minded, courteous, and respectful of other's opinions during the meeting and support problem-solving using the democratic process.
 - Board members are expected to keep confidential board meeting discussion, as appropriate. This also includes disagreeing in private and showing a collaborative front in public.
- **Set Policy and Strategic Direction.**
 - The Board sets policy, formulates goals and uses all available information and resources to advance the association in the best interests of its members.
 - A portion of each board meeting is set aside to evaluate the Strategic Plan progress. Facilitated strategic planning usually takes place every four years.
 - Staff executes Board decisions.
 - CEO is responsible for all association operations.
- **Chair one or more committees.**
 - Committees bring member perspective and insight to the development of programs and services.
 - Each committee meets as often as necessary to accomplish its goals, usually one to two times per month via conference call.
 - The STMA President appoints all Committee Chairs.
 - The Chair is responsible for facilitating the calls, setting the agenda, managing its progress to its goals, and developing the budget for the committee's work. Staff assists in all committee activities.
- **Attend special events, as needed.**
 - This includes representing STMA at various industry events, often presenting a technical topic and/or the state of the association on behalf of STMA. Staff will provide association and other non-technical information for the presentation or create the presentation.
 - The President may be asked to speak at international events, and should have a current passport
- **Attend and actively participate in the annual conference.**
 - Board members are expected to volunteer to moderate sessions and participate when asked.
 - Board members may be asked to play in the golf tournament held just prior to the conference.
 - All board members can receive complimentary registration, travel, accommodations and meals for their conference attendance.

- **Exhibit a high level of professionalism.**
 - STMA board members are held to high standards of conduct professionally and personally. Each board member is required to abide by the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Standards.

Typical Calendar

January – New board members take office; STMA Conference and Exhibition; Committee chairs appointed

February – Committee chairs formalize their committees including members and goals.

March – Spring board meeting; Committees finalized and committee work fully underway

April-June – Conference Committees develop conference program and budget

May-July – Nominations Committee develops recommended slate of candidates for election to Board of Directors

July – Summer Board meeting; conference program is reviewed and budget is proposed and approved.

August-September – Committee chairs develop budget for following year

October – Fall Board meeting; next years' association budget is approved; Awards Committee meets to judge applicants and makes awards; Scholarship Committee receives applications to begin the judging process; Board votes on Founders' applicants

November – Balloting information for Board of Directors sent to voting members. Also includes any Bylaws changes or other special votes required of the membership.

December – Candidates notified of election results and prepare to attend January board meeting. December 31 closes the fiscal year for STMA.